



# Bitterroot National Forest

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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **“ Another Thunderstorm - Another dozen new starts ”**

Hamilton, Montana, July 16, 2007 9:30 pm — Twelve new starts showed up across the Bitterroot National Forest on Monday. The first, located in Clairmont Creek, was discovered early on Monday morning and was probably started by Sunday's lightning storm. The remaining eleven starts were generated by the storm that passed through the area late Monday afternoon and early Monday evening.

Monday's storm included strong winds and lightning, along with some light showers. Initial attack forces have already contained many of the fires reported yesterday and are being dispatched again today to the new starts. Two additional 20-person initial attack crews from Alaska and one 8-person initial attack module from Arizona are reporting to the Forest on Tuesday. An additional helicopter will also arrive on Tuesday bringing the fleet of helicopters available for fire support up to three.

None of the new starts that crews have responded to so far are of any significant size. The Michael Fire remains at 60 acres in size and is considered contained. The Harlan Gulch fire remains at 35 acres and firefighters remain on the scene working on the fire itself and watching for spot fires. The Harrington Ridge Wildland Fire Use fire in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness has grown to 100 acres and remains within prescriptions set by fire managers. For more information about the status of recent and new starts, please visit the Bitterroot National Forest Dispatch Center website at <http://63.196.254.151/WildWeb/WCMT-BRC.htm> and follow the link to "open incidents."

The fire weather watch for Tuesday is similar to recent days and includes warnings of potential thunderstorm activity coupled with high temperatures and dry conditions in the woods. Crews will continue to fight the existing starts, and lookouts and air patrol will monitor the Forest for any holdovers and additional new starts from the past days' storms.

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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